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The Daily Press.

HONGKONG, MAY 18TH, 1876.

The agitation on the Chinese question in California still proceeds. There can now be no lingering doubt that the people of that State are seriously alarmed at the

prospect opened up by the apparently increasing immigration of the Chinese. The agitation was started in the first instance by interested persons, and found favour among the lower class white population, but the statements which have been made in the course of the investigation, conducted at San Francisco, have certainly tended to increase the opposition to the Chinese.

Many of the statements volunteered by witnesses are great exaggerations and some of them judicious fabrications, but almost without exception the testimony taken is damaging to the Chinese residents. The reports of the filthy condition of Chinatown in San Francisco are credible enough, no doubt, but the assertion made by a witness that ninety-nine out of every hundred Chinese smoked opium cannot be accepted as a fact. That a great deal of the drug is consumed in California is a fact, but the sweeping charge is in long distances from the mark. The case against the Chinese is made sufficiently clear without such gross exaggerations as this. It is proved that their quarter in San Francisco is disgustingly filthy and abounds in haunts of vice and iniquity; but why, it may be asked, have they been permitted to live in such a crowded and dirty condition? Was it not the duty of the municipal authorities to prevent such a state of things? Have they not power to order that the streets of Chinatown shall be made a certain width, and that only a certain number of persons shall tenant the houses? It is the business of the authorities to prevent over-crowding, and the sanitary condition of the Chinese quarter in San Francisco is to be ascribed to the neglect of the corporation of that city to exercise its powers. In all large cities there is a tendency among the lower classes to huddle together, and it is not to be wondered at that the Chinese, who can subsist in fewer square feet of room than any other people, should economics space in California, where the rents are enormously high. The Chinese can be made to observe sanitary regulations, and it is the duty of the municipal authorities to do so.

The opposition to the Chinese is not, however, general. It is only partial after all, and arose in the first instance in the labour competition. The native born American

really feels little personal interest in the Chinese, he has no hostile feeling to the Chinaman, and would willingly encourage his emigration. But the agitators have votes, and therefore influence; consequently they have succeeded in rousing a movement against the invasion of the labour market by the Chinese. Already there are symptoms that the agitation is affecting the prospects of the Chinese in some branches of employment. A boot manufacturer in San Francisco stated that for the last four years his firm had employed from two hundred to three hundred Chinamen, but that at the present time they had only one hundred Chinese employed, and it was their intention, as far as practicable, to entirely dispense with Chinese labour. It is very possible other firms may follow the same course, and that some sources of industry will, for the present, be closed to the Chinese. But there are others in which they have no competitors. They may be said to wash the lines of California, and in some important industries their labour is valuable and appreciated. It is gratifying to notice that, amid all the agitation and clamour raised, not the slightest sign of a disposition to resort to violence has been shown by the people of San Francisco. The Chinese have nothing to fear in this direction; the only means adopted to decrease their immigration will be lawful and peaceful ones. The California authorities are well able to protect them from any popular demonstrations; it is very improbable, any were contemplated, that the excitement will most likely subside so long, perhaps for any active steps have been taken to secure a diminution in the tide of Asiatic immigration. If, however, the Californians are foolish enough to stop it altogether, they will soon have reason to repeat the adoption of such a policy. They must remember that the Chinese are birds of passage, and are consequently not likely to out-number the white population. It is also in their power, by wise legislation, to impose such restrictions upon the Chinese as to render them a moral and sanitary sense, more repulsive members of the community. The fear lest the Asiatic element should one day become dominant in the Pacific States is, we think, a groundless one, considering that, after all, the years emigration has been going on from China, thither, barely two hundred thousand Chinese are now to be found in the Republic. Few of those, too, are married, and the Chinese community depend for their increase entirely on immigration. In a few months time, probably, when the present alarm has gone by, the people of the Western States will see its groundlessness as clearly as dispassionate lookers-on do now.

The Rachel left Sydney on the 18th ultmo for Shanghai.

The banque Mary Blair cleared from Sydney (N.S.W.), on the 19th ultmo for Shanghai.

The Coolie Herald states that there has been a great rush to the new goldfield, and that at the present time there are 4,000 people on the ground.

A Chinese named Ah Chung was hanged on the 18th ult. at Dayingkang Gaol, New South Wales, for the murder of a fellow prisoner in Paramatta Gaol.

A telegram in the *Argus* announces the arrival in England from China of the steamer *Mercury* on the 25th ult., and of the *St. George* on the 3rd instant.

Yesterday morning a long strip of the wall in Castle-road, opposite Dr. Clouth's house, fell bodily into the road below, fortunately doing no injury to passers-by. The accident, due chiefly to the locality in which these walls are constructed, mortars being only used cuttings, are made through you.

Mr. Kingamill—I object to that because it is a leading question. He has his books before him, and they would show if he had made any payment to Aspin. Further, Aspin was a contractor and not a servant of the Company.

Mr. Breton insisted upon his question, but elicited the words "purse" in the "service of the Company" for "servants of the Company."

Mr. Kingamill objected to this question also.

Mr. Russell said him for his grounds.

Mr. Kingamill still objected, and the question was voted.

Witness—Yes, all those employed at the dock come to me for payment.

Mr. Russell—If the objection is sustained the whole will of course be struck out.

Mr. Breton—Before you make any payment to me, witness—Very likely I did.

Mr. Kingamill—What would it be your duty to it?

Witness—It would.

Mr. Kingamill—Can you say whether that sheathing metal was received?

Witness—I cannot remember that particular fact. I have seen several lots landed. Some time ago I was asked to receive a lot of sheathing metal, and I was told to pay for it.

Mr. Kingamill—Did you read the document before you signed it?

Witness—Very likely I did.

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Extracts.

NGAN-TUNG-HIEN.

MOUDEN, 10th April.

In order to prevent a recurrence of the lawlessness which had prevailed for scores of years in the 90-7 of neutral ground between the eastern boundary of Manchuria and the western bank of the Yalu, the Chinese have determined to establish and fortify a city on that river to be called Neantung-hien, the "Fortification of the East." Hearing a good deal of the new city, and especially when at the Coran Gate within a day's march of it, we thought it might be worth visiting, especially as from it we could see the Coran coast on the other side of the river and probably be able to hire a boat and sail up or down the stream to rejoin into the forbidden land; so starting early one morning we passed through the Coran Gate, following the course of the stream which runs East, increasing in volume every few hundred yards by the additions received from every opening gully. Passing by it on our left we soon left behind the huge pile of snow-covered mountains forming the eastern half of Fung-hwang-shan, the road leading through a more or less marshy valley, and the canals are innumerable streams of willows cut down by stealthy Chinese and Macches of the west. Contrary to our expectation we found every inch of good ground occupied up to the Hui-way House, of which we inquired what we could get. At this point Ching-ling, the Chinese land-surveyor, was busy measuring out and noting down every man's allotment. He began this work in the beginning of last autumn and it is yet far from completion, the possession of many hundreds of thousands of acres being now for the first time officially registered and taxed.

When the Chinese army marched eastwards to extirpate the robbers on the Yalu, it was found that not a foot of good arable land or an acre of mountain ground was unclaimed; the gles on each side of, and at a distance (for safety) from, the main valley, being well-peopled for many years back, principally by Manchus and Shantung men over whom the Chinese Government had no jurisdiction; the robbers to the east were almost all Shantung men, as are the men employed in bringing down to the sea the numerous timber boats from the upper reaches of the Yalu. We found some men who had lived nineteen years in these gles, and many over ten.

On inquiring how many thousand families lived among those gles it was replied that the number was unknown, but that there were many scores of thousands. According to the rule of the land in the west we found an inn for every 10*li*, all of the most primitive construction imaginable, which may be judged from the fact that Ching-ling, the best, is 30 feet long, built in November last, after the robbers were put down by a young good-natured enterprising fellow from Fung-hwang-shan. The few beams and rafters of tattered trees came from the nearest hill, over which were one or two layers of mill stalk, the dried hanging leaves of which formed a ceiling, and the walls of modulated mud stalks. Yet in these shanties he and every other man-keeper hopes to get rich in a few years from the traffic to and from the newly-opened port of Ngan-tung-hien. Right east of this inn, running East and West, is a splendid range of mountains, not so high as Fung-hwang-shan—probably about 1200 feet. To the North of the same inn is the hottest and best of the many mineral springs of this province.

On the way to the new settlement we saw not a few aspiring Dick Whittingtons with their bundles, and a few trudging back weary, finding it was not the place for them. The hills which a few years ago were covered with oaks, we found almost bare, of trees, these having been cut down for fuel, buildings, or transport. Everywhere the stumps of oaks were burning slowly away to make room for the coming harvest. The long dry grass on the more gently-sloping hills was set on fire for the same purpose. Although we scaled the last mountain range and on reaching the top of the pass were delighted at overlooking the Yalu far below us, glistening in the afternoon sun, with the beautifully wooded Coran slopes on the other side, thickly studded with houses, ranges after range of mountains showing themselves behind far as the eye could reach. These Coran mountains are not high, resembling those west of the Yalu, varying from 200 to 1,000 feet, one the highest visible, probably 1,500 or 2,000 feet, being the fine serrated range east of the Coran Nai-ho-shan. The mists were visible of Chinese vessels moored to the west bank—or anchored in mid-stream with some entering and some departing, forming a forever scene in the grand clear sunlight not soon to be forgotten. Descending the side of the mountain, which we found very marshy, and the earth black, a rare sight in Manchuria, we soon got to our destination. Making for the first large mill-stalk-covered house, judged to be an inn, we found it crowded with the military. The only other in was similarly occupied. But some Tientsin soldiers whom we have always found more kindly disposed to foreigners and especially to the "Xing-chi-hi," the result of their foreign drill—directed us to a house on the face of a hill to the N.W., a distillery and granary. Arrived there we found it a storehouse in fact, and a distillery in prospect. The corner, as any distiller should be, soon made his appearance, and first of all made every conceivable objection against taking us in, for it was there the Chien-sien had his quarters; but as the said worshipful dignitary had the preceding day gone south to Tung-kow-tun, and would not be back again for a week, the distiller thought he could put up with us if it was made worth his trouble. Being pressed to name his terms he made half dozen long speeches, the burden of each being, "Well you know, this is not an inn." We assured him again of our knowledge, well aware of what he meant, as though when he was well nigh exhausted after another long speech he agreed to let us have an end of it, on the part of which was to please our side the joiners and laborers employed on the premises, if we gave him two dollars per night. Laughingly offering the same sum for three nights, another long speech followed, which was so much, and we indignantly rose, walked out, and were about to order the cart to the street to look out for any hole which could not be much worse, and which would be given without speeches, when the fellow afraid of losing his pay—offered the servant to let him have the lodgings at the price offered, slightly over two dollars. To cool down we walked up the hill behind the house, while he and his men curtailed off a corner of the long with two men, the house being a simile—a that above-mentioned. The prospect from the hill was all that heart could desire, impenetrable lines of mountains, numerous fern valleys, trees and river. To the north about 30*li* the dazzling white wall of Ngan-chow attracting the eye, encircling the top of the hill on which stands the most westerly of the Coran cities, above the eastern bank of the Yalu.

The whole line of coast below that city seemed to be one long line of villages, and the small snow-covered Coran summits apparently immeasurable. The Chinese houses is small enough; the Coran smaller, but with taller chimneys at the ends of the houses. All the floor is *fan*, so that the empty spaces within must be very small indeed. The pure white dresses of the Corans were visible among the houses, in the fields and among the willow trees which shaded the river bank. In the fields one of their big bulls kept four men occupied, one holding the plough, one

leading the bull, one scattering manure and one casting in the seed, all walking as fast as the could, the latter two frequently running, for these Coran bulls, whether drawing a cart or over half-a-ton or pulling the plough go at a pace which we have never seen attained by any other of the bovine tribe. They feed in haste, almost like swine, on boiled pulse mixed with straw.

The opening of the port of Shabu and the definitive choice of it, after much hesitation, as the site of the future city of Ngan-tung-hien has of course given rise to much speculation, both among the roving adventurers, possessors of the land, and among the merchants of the western cities of Fung-hwang-shan and Siu-yang. The land was occupied and cultivated and the place used as a small port before the recent arrival there of the Chinese army, who made it their head-quarters in the north, for it commands the northern entrance of Fung-hwang-tau.

When the barracks were built the second year, our fellow-lodgers turned in to rest, but not to sleep, for on the same long road, the mists were Fung-hwang-chung, merchants who had come to spy out the future, and were now whispering of its future, of sites for shops, etc., complaining of the high price of furs, and the exorbitant Chinese dues; and on the other hand, as the numerous stumps of willows cut down by stealthy Chinese and Macches of the west. Contrary to our expectation we found every inch of good ground occupied up to the Hui-way House, of which we inquired what we could get. At this point Ching-ling, the Chinese land-surveyor, was busy measuring out and noting down every man's allotment. He began this work in the beginning of last autumn and it is yet far from completion, the possession of many hundreds of thousands of acres being now for the first time officially registered and taxed.

Going out on the early morning compass in hand, to fix the bearing of various points, it was utterly useless, to day that we had come to look out a lucky spot for a foreign warehouse, and many and frequent were the questions as to how many ships and steamers were coming and when.

Breakfast over we went down to the river bank along the east street, formed of several scores of houses as above, and of

others of a more substantial character, in course of erection. The Shantung dialect

greets the ear at every step and the people are peculiarly impudent and uncivil,

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